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Wednesday, Oct 27, 2004

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Posted on Mon, Oct. 25, 2004

## Both parties complain of vote fraud

**Republicans and Democrats in the Philadelphia area have made accusations to help energize get-out-the-vote efforts.**

By Tom Infield  
Inquirer Staff Writer

Early last month, Pennsylvania Republicans purchased an official list of about 130,000 people who had registered to vote in Philadelphia in the previous six months.

They mailed letters to each of the 130,000, urging them to consider voting Republican. Then they sat and waited to see what would happen.

Within weeks, about 10,000 of the letters had come back marked "Return to sender" because the was "no such number" or no one by the voter's name living at the address on the envelope.

State Republicans see this as a warning of what they fear most - that the presidential race in Pennsylvania will be tilted by fraud in the state's largest metropolis.

Democrats, in turn, have been complaining about what they view as Republican efforts to confuse, intimidate, and otherwise discourage Philadelphians from voting. They say the GOP has engaged what they term "voter suppression."

In Philadelphia - where more than one million people are registered, four-fifths of them as Democrats - any drop in the vote total would likely be a boon to President Bush.

Republican talk about vote fraud and Democratic talk about voter intimidation have become the targets of an urban war being fought nationwide between the election organizations of Democratic challenger John Kerry and Bush. Each side has used suspicion of the other's motives to energize supporters and get them out to vote Nov. 2.

Political historian Michael Young, a retired professor at Pennsylvania State University-Harrisburg, said there was precedent for each side to worry.

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"Republicans have frequently - almost chronically - engaged in what I think can fairly be called voter-intimidation tactics in order to hold down the Democratic vote," he said. "On the other hand the Democrats have been chronic cheats in being able to vote the cemeteries."

Analysts have said that swing votes in the Philadelphia suburbs may prove the leading factor in deciding the Pennsylvania winner. But in the campaign's final days, the battle of words is focused mainly on Philadelphia and other urban areas.

History shows that suburban and rural Republicans are more likely than city-dwelling Democrats to go to the polls faithfully in election after election. Urban Democrats are more prone to turn out or for big elections.

In 2000, both parties were stunned by a huge outpouring of Philadelphians. The 348,223-vote plurality that Democratic candidate Al Gore received in the city carried him to an unexpectedly easy victory statewide over Bush.

For Bush to win this time, he may have to bottle that tide. And for Kerry to win, he may have to reopen the floodgate.

On Thursday, at a Bush campaign office in Radnor, Christian Marrone, legal counsel to state Republicans, laid out the 10,000 returned letters. They extended from one end of a table to the other.

Marrone said the Republicans had looked into a sample of the letters and had found that 15 out of a batch of 100 registrants were dead. Some letters, he said, came back from vacant lots and boarded-up buildings. "There's some serious issues with these registrations, some serious fraud taking place," he said.

The district attorney and election officials in Republican-controlled Delaware County have called a news conference for tomorrow at which they are expected to lay out similar allegations there.

Edward Schulgen, a Philadelphia deputy city commissioner, urged the Republicans to turn over any evidence of bogus registrations.

"If they give us the 10,000 letters they say are bad, we'll take a look at them," Schulgen said.

But he said that, by law, the city cannot remove names from the rolls within 90 days of an election.

An independent analyst and a top city Republican said they doubted that the problem of bogus registrations was as widespread as the state Republicans suggested.

Frederick Voigt, director of the nonpartisan Committee of Seventy, an election watchdog group, said the fact that the GOP got back 10,000 letters doesn't mean 10,000 fraudulent votes are waiting to be cast.

In a transient city, many people may have moved over a six-month period, he said. And many letters might not have reached people living in shelters or substandard housing.

People who don't live in a particular neighborhood but who show up at that neighborhood's polling place typically will be caught, Voigt said. Each party may have poll-watchers.

Michael Meehan, legal counsel to the Republican City Committee, said his state counterparts were being "Chicken Littles" about a problem he doesn't think is as bad as they do. "The fear is that having names that shouldn't be on the rolls leaves open the possibility that skulduggery will be afoot," Meehan said. "I don't know they're necessarily fraudulent."

Republicans have also been critical of a move by Gov. Rendell, a Democrat, to appoint a Democratic partisan - former Kerry fund-raiser Mark Aronchick of Philadelphia - to lead a nonpartisan effort by the Department of State to help counties with their vote counts.

"It looks bad," Republican U.S. Sen. Rick Santorum said. "I have dealt with [Aronchick]. He is a partisan Democrat. It gives people a reason to question the integrity of the election."

Last week, a group of GOP ward leaders accused the Democratic-controlled Philadelphia election board of putting 63 polling places in illegal places. The ward leaders said that 42 places were not accessible to the handicapped, that one was in a bar, and that one was in the state office of a Democratic candidate: State Sen. Vincent Fumo.

Democrats tried to turn the criticism back on the Republicans by noting that 53 of the 63 polling places the GOP cited were in predominantly black areas. They said that what the Republicans were really up to was holding down the black vote.

"I think it's a blatant attempt to try to confuse voters, and, if you confuse voters, oftentimes you disenfranchise voters," said State Rep. T.J. Rooney of Bethlehem, Pa., the state Democratic chairman.

An allegation of voter intimidation was raised at the Oct. 13 meeting of the city election board.

An official said he had received calls from about 30 longtime voters who wondered whether they were still registered. The callers explained, he said, that they had received calls from someone telling them not to bother going to the polls because their registrations had expired. In fact, they had not.

Democrats didn't blame Republicans. But they asked: Who else would have a motive to discourage Philadelphians from voting?

Democrats have also pointed to reports that Pennsylvania college students have been tricked into signing papers that changed their registration to Republican.

Republicans have said the Democratic complaints are much ado about little.

They cited a political motivation revealed in a leaked Kerry campaign memo from Colorado that to Democratic loyalists: "If no signs of intimidation techniques have emerged yet, launch a pre-emptive strike."

Young said that charges, back and forth, would likely continue until Election Day - and beyond if the results are squeaker-close.

"Neither side has been beyond reproach," he said. "It may turn out to mean the election. So the stakes are enormous."

Contact staff writer Tom Infield at 610-313-8205 or [tinfield@phillynews.com](mailto:tinfield@phillynews.com).



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## Tonight BBC TV to Reveal New Florida Vote Scandal Republican "Caging List" *BBC Television News On-Line*

**Tuesday, October 26, 2004**

**Greg Palast, reporting**

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A secret document obtained from inside Bush campaign headquarters in Florida suggests a plan - possibly in violation of US law - to disrupt voting in the state's African-American voting districts, a BBC Newsnight investigation reveals.

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Two e-mails, prepared for the executive director of the Bush campaign in Florida and the campaign's national research director in Washington DC, contain a 15-page so-called "caging list".

It lists 1,886 names and addresses of voters in predominantly black and traditionally Democrat areas of Jacksonville, Florida.

An elections supervisor in Tallahassee, when shown the list, told Newsnight: "The only possible reason why they would keep such a thing is to challenge voters on election day."

Ion Sancho, a Democrat, noted that Florida law allows political party operatives inside polling stations to stop voters from obtaining a ballot.

### **Mass challenges**

They may then only vote "provisionally" after signing an affidavit attesting to their legal voting status.

Mass challenges have never occurred in Florida. Indeed, says Mr Sancho, not one challenge has been made to a voter "in the 16 years I've been supervisor of elections."

"Quite frankly, this process can be used to slow down the voting process and cause chaos on election day; and discourage voters from voting."

Sancho calls it "intimidation." And it may be illegal.

In Washington, well-known civil rights attorney, Ralph Neas, noted that US federal law prohibits targeting challenges to voters, even if there is a basis for the challenge, if race is a factor in targeting the voters.

The list of Jacksonville voters covers an area with a majority of black residents.

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When asked by Newsnight for an explanation of the list, Republican spokespersons claim the list merely records returned mail from either fundraising solicitations or returned letters sent to newly registered voters to verify their addresses for purposes of mailing campaign literature.

Republican state campaign spokeswoman Mindy Tucker Fletcher stated the list was not put together "in order to create" a challenge list, but refused to say it would not be used in that manner.

Rather, she did acknowledge that the party's poll workers will be instructed to challenge voters, "Where it's stated in the law."

There was no explanation as to why such clerical matters would be sent to top officials of the Bush campaign in Florida and Washington.

### **Purging soldiers**

At least 50 persons on the list are in the military, most stationed at the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville. They now face challenge because some, like Randall Prausa of Atlantic Beach, have been shipped overseas.

### **Private detective**

In Jacksonville, to determine if Republicans were using the lists or other means of intimidating voters, we filmed a private detective filming every "early voter" - the majority of whom are black - from behind a vehicle with blacked-out windows.

The private detective claimed not to know who was paying for his all-day services.

On the scene, Democratic Congresswoman Corinne Brown said the surveillance operation was part of a campaign of intimidation tactics used by the Republican Party to intimate and scare off African American voters, almost all of whom are registered Democrats.

Greg Palast reporting. The film will be broadcast by Newsnight tonight, Tuesday, 26 October, 2004 at 2230 BST (5:30pm New York time).

=====  
Contact: [media@gregpalast.com](mailto:media@gregpalast.com)

View Greg Palast's BBC Television film, "Bush Family Fortunes," available this week on DVD in an updated edition from The Disinformation Company at <http://www.gregpalast.com/bff-dvd.htm>



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## Politics

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### Remark sets off election fervor

October 13, 2004

BY KATHLEEN GRAY  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER



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With a choice of words he now regrets, an Oakland County Republican legislator gave Democrats the opening they needed this summer to sound the alarm about perceived GOP efforts to challenge the votes of poor and minority voters.

State Rep. John Pappageorge's comments at a Republican county meeting in July — "If we do not suppress the Detroit vote, we're going to have a tough time in this election cycle" — were first reported in the Free Press, but now have become a national symbol for Democrats. Since then, Pappageorge, R-Troy, has resigned as a chairman of Michigan Veterans for Bush-Cheney.

On Tuesday, former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, U.S. Rep. John Conyers, D-Detroit, Democratic Party chairman Mark Brewer and television Judge Greg Mathis reminded reporters of Pappageorge's remark as they presented a plan to enlist an army of lawyers and volunteers at the polls on Election Day.

Coupled with the still-fresh memories of Florida's problems in the 2000 election when thousands of votes went uncounted, the group said it plans to make sure that minority voters, who overwhelmingly cast ballots for Democrats, aren't turned away from polling places Nov. 2.

"We have seen what happened when 4 to 6 million people are disenfranchised during the 2000 election," Archer said. "My advice to anyone who has any desire to suppress the vote of African Americans or Latinos: Don't do it."

The national spotlight is something that Pappageorge once may have coveted. He's a Vietnam War veteran and an experienced politician who worked his way from party activist to county commissioner to state representative. He also ran and lost in two congressional races against Democratic incumbent Sander Levin. But having his name appear in news reports, editorials and columns across the country for a statement that some view as racist is not the limelight he imagined.

"When it first happened, I said, 'Oh my goodness, I've been misunderstood,'" he said Tuesday. "The context of my comment was in changing voter preferences. It was not about preventing people from going to the polls."

The 73-year-old lawmaker said he went to every Detroit legislator in the state

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House of Representatives and apologized. And he immediately resigned from his position in the Bush-Cheney campaign.

That hasn't stopped Democrats from "playing the race card in a way that would help their candidate," Pappageorge said. "Moveon.org took it one step further and accused me of being some sort of national plot, and that's ridiculous."

He's received hundreds of phone calls and e-mails from friends and critics about the comment and says he now understands the explosive connotation of the word *suppress*. It's been banished from his vocabulary.

"Yes, this has been a big hurt," he said. "There was certainly no racist intent in my comment."

But Democrats are taking his comments -- and what they say is a concerted effort to deny the vote to thousands of likely Democrats -- seriously. They plan to have 60,000 lawyers nationwide, including 700 in Michigan, available Nov. 2 to help people who report problems at their polling places. An additional 1,400 volunteers will scatter across the state to make sure voters in minority neighborhoods don't encounter challenges to their right to vote.

They'll be joined by hundreds of Republican volunteers who will target Democratic-leaning precincts for any indication of fraud.

"Just as Democrats apparently believe that Republicans are engaged in voter intimidations, many in my party believe Democrats engineer voter fraud," GOP chairman Betsy DeVos said in a letter to Brewer in late August. "The Michigan Republican Party is not, and will not be, engaged in any effort to suppress or intimidate voters."

She suggested the two parties work together, ensuring that suspect precincts have poll watchers from each party. But Brewer declined the offer.

"We view the proposal as hypocritical. Their whole effort has been to intimidate voters and we're not going to help them with that," Brewer said Tuesday.

Republicans will be looking for people who are either not legally registered to vote or attempting to vote at more than one precinct, said Chris Paolino, spokesman for the state party. Recent reports about some paid voter registration solicitors turning in fraudulent paperwork fueled the GOP's concerns about mischief, he said.

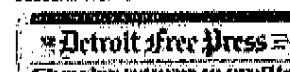
"We don't have specific examples of that happening, but we do have concerns," he said.

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights also is embarking on a program to make sure voters know their rights.

The department will distribute 20,000 brochures to organizations and universities that explain the procedure to deal with local clerks who turn people away from the polls. Voters can call 866-687-8683 to get legal assistance on Election Day. State civil rights director Linda Parker also has been traveling throughout the state to educate people about how to register and vote.



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"We want to make sure that people go to the polls on Nov. 2 and that they're treated with respect," she said.

The Michigan Democratic Party also is trying to make it easier to vote through a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court in Bay City against Michigan Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land and elections director Chris Thomas.

Under federal voting laws, provisional ballots must be offered to voters whose eligibility cannot be determined at their polling place, but may later be counted after election officials verify the voter's registration. The voter has six days to prove he or she was eligible to vote at that precinct.

But Democrats want to count votes of people who are legitimately registered even if they vote in the wrong precinct.

Contact **KATHLEEN GRAY** at 248-351-3298 or [gray@freepress.com](mailto:gray@freepress.com).



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## PREVENTING ELECTION FRAUD

Detroit Free Press (MI)

By KATHLEEN GRAY FREE PRESS STAFF  
WRITER

Date: April 29, 2004; Page: 1B

Edition: METRO FINAL; Section: NWS

Illustration: Photo

Memo: ELECTION 2004

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Republicans said they'll be out in force on Nov. 2, making sure voters in Michigan's heavily Democratic precincts are registered to vote in those precincts. Democrats said they'll be out, too, watching to make sure the Republicans don't scare voters away.

With more than six months until the presidential election, the posturing over voter fraud has begun.

State Republicans said they want to recruit up to 1,000 people as **poll watchers**; Democrats said they are embarking on an unprecedented recruitment of volunteers to keep an eye on the **GOP poll watchers**.

If it all seems heavy-handed, blame Florida -- the state that held up the presidential election for more than a month in 2000 before George W. Bush won a 537-vote margin of victory that Democrats still dispute.

"Due to what happened in 2000 and the whole issue of voter integrity, we want to make sure that every vote is counted -- but only one time," said Dan Devine, chairman of the Oakland County campaign to re-elect Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney.

The local **GOP** is hoping to recruit 300 people to stand guard at **polling** places in Oakland County, said Jim Aldrich, the attorney for the Oakland County Bush-Cheney campaign. That compares with eight **poll watchers** in Oakland County precincts in 2000.

Aldrich said that in 2000, the state party had reports of people

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voting up to four times under different names in Pontiac.

"This is not a job for sissies," he told more than 300 Republicans attending the Oakland County **GOP** convention Tuesday night. "The UAW has Election Day off, and they will do anything to challenge us."

Reports of voter fraud came as a surprise to Oakland County Clerk G. William Caddell, a Republican from Commerce Township.

"Last night was the first I'd heard of any problems," he said. "I want to be a good party person, but I haven't heard about this and none of my local clerks have reported problems."

In Pontiac, Darlene Jones, an assistant city clerk, said some voters were redirected to the correct **polling** places but she was unaware of allegations of voter fraud.

"There have been incidents in the past, where we have challenged voters and it did turn out to be accurate," said Jeff Stormo, spokesman for the Michigan Republican Party.

Melvin Butch Hollowell, chairman of the Michigan Democratic Party, said the tactic is designed to stunt turnout by making it uncomfortable for people to vote.

"In 2002, there were challengers in Detroit approaching voters and asking them if they had a criminal history or if their child-support payments were up to date," he said.

In Michigan, anyone who is 18 or older on Election Day and who is registered to vote, can vote -- including convicted felons who have served their time.

Contact KATHLEEN GRAY at 248-351-3298 or [gray@freepress.com](mailto:gray@freepress.com)

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Friday, October 22, 2004

### Statement from RNC Senior Advisor Robert Traynham On Ohio GOP's Effort To Combat Voter Fraud

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:** Robert Traynham, Christine Iverson  
(202) 863-8614

**WASHINGTON DC** – RNC Senior Advisor to the Chairman Robert Traynham made the following statement today:

"The Ohio Republican Party is taking every precaution to protect and defend the voters of Ohio from having fraud perpetrated on their election system. Every voter should have a guarantee that their vote will not be negated by outside groups' intent on causing chaos at the polls and fostering an environment that allows fraudulent votes to be counted equally as valid ones."

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